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## **GAO Gives California High-Speed Rail High Marks in Audit**

Sacramento, Calif. - In the most extensive audit to date of the California High-Speed Rail Authority (Authority), the U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO) gives the Authority high marks in each area studied including estimates of cost, revenue, ridership, and economic impact analysis. The GAO finds the Authority's ridership and revenue forecasts to be reasonable and that the Authority used best practices and followed all applicable laws. The GAO report contains no formal recommendations for the Authority.

"The GAO's audit report is extremely clear that the Authority's processes and methodologies in estimating its costs, revenue and ridership are sound," said Dan Richard, Chair of the Authority's Board of Directors. "The Authority appreciates the GAO's input and is already taking steps to incorporate those suggestions."

"The GAO's audit is an important validation from a highly respected independent government watchdog," said Jeff Morales, Authority CEO. "This continues the momentum of the last year as the Authority moves forward to bring the high-speed rail program to California and break ground in the Central Valley this summer."

The GAO audit found that the Authority:

- Followed all applicable guidance from the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA), which administers the Authority's federal grants.
- Ridership and revenue forecasts are reasonable.
- Substantially met best practices for developing accurate cost estimates and the report highlights the Authority's efforts to produce cost estimates that correctly reflect the program's scope.
- The funding plan recognizes the uncertainty of the current funding environment and is building the project in usable phases and has identified an alternative funding source.
- Did a comprehensive job in identifying key economic impacts that could result from the high-speed rail project demonstrating the strong economic case for the project. This includes its ability to create jobs in the short-term and its potential to change the state's economic landscape in the long-term through improved connections between its metropolitan areas.
- The GAO report contains no formal recommendations for the Authority.

The U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO) is an independent, nonpartisan agency that works for Congress. Often called the "congressional watchdog," GAO investigates how the federal government spends taxpayer dollars. The performance audit of the Authority was conducted from February 2012 to March 2013.

***About California High-Speed Rail Authority***

The California High-Speed Rail Authority (Authority) is responsible for planning, designing, building and operation of the first high-speed rail system in the nation. By 2029, the system will run from San Francisco to the Los Angeles basin in under three hours at speeds capable of over 200 miles per hour. The system will eventually extend to Sacramento and San Diego, totaling 800 miles with up to 24 stations. In addition, the Authority is working with regional partners to implement a statewide rail modernization plan that will invest billions of dollars in local and regional rail lines to meet the state's 21st century transportation needs. To learn more visit the Authority's website at [cahighspeedrail.ca.gov](http://cahighspeedrail.ca.gov) and join us on [facebook.com/CaliforniaHighSpeedRail](https://facebook.com/CaliforniaHighSpeedRail) and follow us at [twitter.com/cahsra/](https://twitter.com/cahsra/).

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